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Journal Item

How to cite:

Cathcart, Charles (2016). Edward Greene, Goldsmith; William Marston, Apprentice; and Eastward Ho!. *Early Theatre*, 19(2) pp. 81–100.

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Version: Version of Record

Link(s) to article on publisher's website:
<http://dx.doi.org/doi:10.12745/et.19.2.2678>

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Edward Greene, Goldsmith; William Marston, Apprentice; and *Eastward Ho!*

*This essay presents new information about the family of John Marston the dramatist. I review this material in relation to the work of Suzanne Gossett and W. David Kay, the two editors of *Eastward Ho!* for The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson. My article explores how our knowledge of a writer's personal relationships may affect our understanding of that writer's contribution to a collaborative enterprise.*

In the summer of 1605 three members of the Marston family each experienced a significant event. All were in their twenties. Thomas Marston, eldest son and heir of William Marston of Middleton in Shropshire, was admitted to the Middle Temple. His brother William became free of the Goldsmiths Company. And their cousin John ran into serious trouble as a consequence of his involvement in writing *Eastward Ho!*

In this essay I bring forward new information about the family of John Marston the dramatist and connect this evidence with biographical findings that have attracted little attention since the time of R.E. Brettell's thesis in 1927 or that of the publication of the Middle Temple records some twenty years previously.¹ I will seek to relate this material to a significant publishing exercise of much more recent times: the work of the two editors of *Eastward Ho!* for *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, Suzanne Gossett and W. David Kay.² In doing so my aim will be to explore how a knowledge of a writer's personal situation may affect our understanding of that writer's contribution to a collaborative enterprise. In particular, the overwhelming likelihood that John Marston's cousin held an apprenticeship with Edward Greene, goldsmith, at the time when *Eastward Ho!* was drafted allows us to look anew at the play's own apprentice, Quicksilver. For the prodigal Quicksilver enjoyed a conspicuous involvement in a circle of gallants who repeatedly address him as 'cousin',

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enjoyed visits to the London theatres, took pride in his gentle status, and was the younger son of a provincial family.

Attempting this biographical line of argument raises an issue of scholarly proportion. On the publication of the comedy as part of the Cambridge *Jonson* in 2012, a sustained critical and editorial endeavour reached fruition. Gossett and Kay prepared the text of *Eastward Ho!* that forms part of the Cambridge edition, and in related ventures the two editors have independently brought forward remarkable appraisals of the play and its making. The analysis of collaborative drama has often caused a special difficulty for commentators, who have — in addressing a work of plural authorship — sometimes been inhibited by the absence of a single authorial agent. Gossett has reflected on the collaborative enterprise of 1605, principally from the perspective of Marston's agency.³ She accepts much of the thinking that sees in the text of *Eastward Ho!* a Marstonian opening, a long middle section that largely bears the verbal imprint of George Chapman, and a final act that seems mainly to be the work of Jonson — all roughly as scholars such as Thomas Marc Parrott, C.G. Petter, and D.J. Lake have suggested.⁴ At the same time, Gossett distances herself from the view that these authorial divisions are rigid ones. She repeatedly presents evidence to suggest that within each of the three putative sections the work of more than one dramatist is present. That is, in addition to the writing of the dramatist who seems to have had the principal drafting responsibility for any one part of the comedy, the involvement of one or both of his peers is also apparent in that same section. Gossett therefore claims for *Eastward Ho!* a more interactive — a more genuinely collaborative — creative process than a straightforward division of composing labour into discrete authorial shares. The two scholars' text of *Eastward Ho!* itself forms the first major edition of the play for over a generation.⁵

As the Cambridge *Eastward Ho!* appeared, Gossett's editorial collaborator published his own critical assessment of the comedy, re-examining the workings of parody and satire within it.⁶ Kay gauges the tone and mood of the offering for early Jacobean playgoers at Blackfriars and for the reading public that were clearly eager to buy the three quartos of the play that appeared in 1605. On the one hand, Kay adjudicates between those who find the satiric impulses of *Eastward Ho!* to be sharp and even heartless and those who find the comic spirit more benign. And on the other, Kay acknowledges the fact that three different (and to some extent distinctive) authorial agencies were at work in the creation of the comedy whilst also finding new ways of suggesting how the collective activity of three able and experienced comic dramatists was somehow able to transcend the individual capacities of the trio and create a play of peculiar grace and balance.

This moment is therefore a special one for those who admire *Eastward Ho!* The efforts of Kay and Gossett, moreover, have joined with rich recent work on censorship and regulation, on London's theatrical companies and their repertoires, on the links between the theatre and the city, and upon commercial endeavour and colonial exploration.⁷ Each of these areas of research bears closely upon *Eastward Ho!* The play's readers are likely to feel privileged to encounter the play at this period in its critical history.

By contrast, the new information that this essay offers may appear marginal. A personal and authorial connection with the milieu of *Eastward Ho!* might indicate a reductive approach to the comedy. Frederick Fleay, for example, stepped aside from his sequential account of Chapman's plays in *A Biographical Chronicle of the English Drama* to offer the aside that Quicksilver is 'a caricature of Luke Hatton'.⁸ Fleay was casually accepting an earlier suggestion that Quicksilver was modelled upon the highwayman Hatton. The identification has not subsequently troubled critics of *Eastward Ho!* Exploiting the biographical links between the family of one of the contributory playwrights and the milieu of the Blackfriars play certainly risks moving into the speculative territory that Fleay once occupied. A related family link illustrates the precarious value of this present endeavour. For the marital fortunes of Edward Greene's daughters unexpectedly mirror what happens to Touchstone's daughters, Gertrude and Mildred: one married a seafaring adventurer; and another wedded a fellow-apprentice of William Marston, one who — whatever the demeanour of his younger days may have been — ultimately rose to become lord mayor of London.

My object is to place within the public domain some biographical material of genuine interest. The material suggests a new insight into the conception of Francis Quicksilver and it contributes to our understanding of how the involvement of one member of a collaborative team may have an effect upon the corporate endeavour.

The Marston Family

John Marston the playwright came from an old Shropshire family.⁹ His father, John Marston senior, Middle Templar and servant of the City of Coventry, was himself the son of Ralph Marston of Heyton (or Eyton) in Shropshire. Ralph was one of the two sons of another John Marston of Heyton, the poet's great-grandfather in the paternal line. The other son — Ralph's brother — was Thomas Marston of Middleton in Shropshire.¹⁰ He married 'Margaret, the daughter of William Lucy, Captain of Calais, and the eventual heiress of Lucy of Charlote,

Co. Warwick'.¹¹ Thomas's son, William Marston, also of Middleton, was therefore a first cousin of the poet's father, and William's sons were second cousins to the dramatist.

William Marston married Katherine Blashfield (or Plashfeld) of Ludlow in 1571 and of his nine children, four were sons: Thomas, William, Richard, and Francis.¹² The 'Richard Marston of new Inne in the County of *Middlesex*' to whom the poet bequeathed 'my silver Bason and Ewer' was probably not the third son of this family, but may have been the oldest son of Francis, also called Richard.¹³ I shall turn instead to Thomas and William, the two elder sons of William Marston, Sr.

Thomas Marston of the Middle Temple

The Minutes of Parliament of the Middle Temple record the following admission, dated 28 April 1605:

Mr Thomas, son and heir-apparent of William Marston of Middleton, Shropshire, gent., specially; fine, 40s.; bound with Messrs Thomas Greene and Rowley Warde.¹⁴

Thomas is clearly confirmed as the eldest of the brothers, 'son and heir-apparent of William Marston of Middleton'. Born in 1578, he 'matriculated at Broadgate Hall, Oxford, 24 Oct., 1595, aged 17'.¹⁵ He was, or was approaching, 27 years of age when he was admitted to the Middle Temple. Admittance into one of the inns of court was a conventional pathway for a gentleman's son. Such a membership furnished the opportunity to make valuable contacts, to experience metropolitan life, and to acquire a legal knowledge which — though often not pursued for professional purposes — would be helpful to someone with the expectation of managing property and perhaps taking part in the local lay administration of justice.

Thomas Greene, we may note, was Shakespeare's lodger at New Place. Greene called himself Shakespeare's cousin, and was long accepted as kin. When Greene himself had entered the Middle Temple in 1595 his own sponsors were the two John Marstons, father and son.¹⁶ Robert Bearman has set out the details of this connection between Greene and the Marston family:

John the elder had entered the Middle Temple in 1570. Originally from Hayton, near Ludlow, in Shropshire he had, by the mid 1580s, established himself in Warwickshire, being appointed counsel for the city of Coventry in 1585 and its steward in 1588. In 1590, he had been consulted by the Stratford Corporation concerning an

appeal to the Privy Council. John Marston Junior had joined the Middle Temple in 1592, just three years earlier than Greene. The Marstons' involvement in sponsoring Greene's admission clearly implies a connection of sorts between them, most probably derived from these local ties.¹⁷

Greene's own position as sponsor of Thomas Marston confirms the connection between Greene and the Marston family. Indeed, the sponsorship accorded to Thomas Marston, who lacked the Coventry associations of the John Marstons, shows the family nature of the link with particular clarity. At one time scholars took the association between the Marston family and Thomas Greene as an explanation for how the two playwrights may have known one another; the Marstons, on this reading, had sponsored 'Shakespeare's cousin'.¹⁸ Bearman offers a different assessment. He presumes an independent connection between Shakespeare and Marston and raises the possibility that the long period of legal and household association between Shakespeare and Thomas Greene derived from a common acquaintanceship with the Marston family.

It may at first seem surprising that John Marston the poet did not stand as the supporter of his second cousin. By late April 1605 the difficulties following the performances or the print publication of *Eastward Ho!* may possibly have begun and, if he was not actually imprisoned that year, as were Jonson and Chapman, Marston may well have left London. However that may be, an association certainly existed between the two second cousins, for Thomas bequeathed to his brother Francis 'the money which Mr. Docter Wilkes oweth me'.¹⁹ Dr Wilkes was John Marston's father-in-law, with whom Marston lived for eleven years following his marriage.²⁰

An even closer connection between Thomas and John Marston senior appears in John Marston's will of 1599: 'I doe devise thereof to my kinsman and seruante Thomas Marston Twentie nobles' and 'I devise to my saide kinsman and seruant one of my geldings'; moreover, a further twenty nobles 'shalbe delivered to the hands of my saide Cozen Thomas Marston to be bestowed vpon my saide poorest brother Richarde Marston'.²¹ Brettell takes it to be a matter of certainty that this cousin is the same Thomas Marston who was soon to become a member of the Middle Temple, and there can be little doubt that he is right to do so.²² Indeed, given that Thomas is 'seruant' to his father's first cousin, the relationship clearly signals a strong network of family interdependency at play.

William Marston, Apprentice

A residence at one of the inns of court was a customary occupation for the eldest son of a provincial gentleman. For a younger son, however, holding an apprenticeship in one of the great livery companies of London was not unusual. So it was for William Marston, the second son of William Marston the elder, the brother of Thomas, and second cousin to the playwright, as evidenced in the apprenticeship records of the Goldsmiths' Company:

Memorandum that I william marston the sonne of william marston of ludlow in the county of salop *gentleman* haue put my selfe apprentice to Edward grene goldsmith for the tearme of eyght yeares beginning at the feast of saynt Iames 1597.²³

As we have seen, William Marston the elder is named 'William Marston of Middleton' in the Middle Temple record of 1605. So he is in *The Visitation of Shropshire, taken in the year 1623*.²⁴ Both Middleton and Heyton are situated just to the north of Ludlow, and the Katherine Blashfield whom William Marston the elder married was herself from Ludlow.²⁵ She and William may have first lived in her own parish or even in her family home and subsequently — by 1605, when William's eldest son was entered at the Middle Temple — moved to William's family home of Middleton. Given that Thomas was born in 1578, the family's second son would have been ripe for commencing an apprenticeship in 1597.²⁶ We also know that William Marston was later to marry the daughter of a London merchant.²⁷ At all events, William Marston the younger — the apprentice goldsmith — was clearly the son of William and Katherine, the younger brother of Thomas the Middle Templar, and the second cousin of the dramatist. William became free of the Goldsmiths Company on 30 August 1605, just a few months after Thomas had been admitted to the Middle Temple.²⁸

1605, as we have seen, was the year of the three *Eastward Ho!* quartos and probably the year in which the comedy was first played. It was also the year of the controversy it aroused. Jonson and Chapman were certainly imprisoned: according to Drummond's report of Jonson's later recollections, Jonson 'voluntarily imprisoned himself with Chapman and Marston' and 'The report was that they should then had their ears cut and noses'.²⁹ Letters from this time written by Jonson and Chapman seeking help and forgiveness survive. Marston seems to have ceased writing plays by the spring of the following year and it is possible that *Eastward Ho!* features his last writing for the popular stage. There would be little significance in the fact that his cousin, William Marston, Jr, was a goldsmith's

apprentice in the last Elizabethan years and the first Jacobean ones were it not that John Marston had helped to write a play about a London goldsmith during the final months of William's apprenticeship.

Quicksilver

This connection, however, would still be a marginal point of interest but for the vivid depiction of the comedy's own apprentice, Francis Quicksilver. Quicksilver lies at the heart of the play's story, and the opening scene emphatically displays his bearing and delineates his family background. Scholars from Parrott to Gossett and Kay have considered that the first act of *Eastward Ho!* predominantly features the work of John Marston.

At the start of the play Quicksilver '*with his hat, pumps, short sword, and dagger*' is intercepted by his master Touchstone who demands, 'What loose action are you bound for? Come, what comrades are you to meet withal? Where's the supper? Where's the rendezvous?' (1.1.1–4). When Touchstone also asks, 'dost thou jest at thy lawful master contrary to thy indentures?' (19–20), Quicksilver replies:

Why, 'sblood, sir, my mother's a gentlewoman, and my father a Justice of Peace and Quorum; and though I am a younger brother and a prentice, yet I hope I am my father's son; and by God's lid, 'tis for your worship and for your commodity that I keep company. I am entertained among gallants, true. They call me cousin Frank, right. I lend them moneys, good. They spend it, well. But when they are spent, must not they strive to get more? Must not their land fly? And to whom? Shall not Your Worship ha' the refusal? Well, I am a good member of the city if I were well considered. How would merchants thrive, if gentlemen would not be unthrifts? How could gentlemen be unthrifts if their humours were not fed? How should their humours be fed but by white meat and cunning secondings? Well, the city might consider us. I am going to an ordinary now: the gallants fall to play; I carry light gold with me; the gallants call, 'Cousin Frank, some gold for silver!' I change, gain by it; the gallants lose the gold and then call, 'Cousin Frank, lend me some silver.' (21–34)

Quicksilver stresses his gentle status: he is emphatic about this throughout the early part of the play and he persistently treats his master with disdain. Quicksilver is a 'younger brother' (as William Marston was). His father is 'a justice of peace and quorum' (as Thomas Marston may have been preparing himself to be). The 'gallants' with whom he socializes call him 'cousin Frank'. Quicksilver mentions this address three times within the single speech and he proceeds to do so

twice more during the opening scene. Indeed, Quicksilver's friends 'call me "kind cousin Frank", "good cousin Frank", for they know my father' (51–2). Touchstone warns his errant apprentice, 'look to the accounts; your father's bond lies for you: seven score pound is yet in the rear' (47–8).

The most detailed arguments for Marston's role in drafting the first scenes of *Eastward Ho!* are presented by Lake, who builds his case squarely on the following: the correlation between the use of language in those scenes and the preferences Marston displayed elsewhere; the lack of correlation of that language with the habitual choices Jonson and Chapman made; and the evidence that other parts of *Eastward Ho!* show patterns of word use consistent with a theory that either Jonson or Chapman was responsible for writing them.³⁰ Accepting the overall strength of Lake's argument does not — it seems to me — preclude agreeing with Gossett that the play text, in the various sections identified by Lake and others, frequently appears to reflect not only the agency of the main composing agent but also of one or both of his colleagues. On this view, as Gossett argues, the play had a richly collaborative inception.

It remains significant, however, that so many earlier scholars made essentially the same judgement that Lake and Petter were to make.³¹ And we may see that Quicksilver's speech, with its buoyant and cynical rhetoric and its series of questions, has a family resemblance with the set-piece justification of prostitution offered by Freevill in the closely contemporaneous *Dutch Courtesan*:

A poor, decayed mechanical man's wife, her husband is laid up; may she not lawfully be laid down when her husband's only rising is by his wife's falling? A captain's wife wants means, her commander lies in open fields abroad; may not she lie in civil arms at home?³²

The initial delineation of Quicksilver appears to be Marston's; and the knowledge that William Marston, Jr, was completing his apprenticeship with Edward Greene at the time of *Eastward Ho!*'s composition does seem to tally with the specificity of the relations depicted at the outset of the comedy. Moreover, we rapidly find out that Quicksilver is a keen theatregoer. He constantly quotes scraps from *The Spanish Tragedy*, *2 Henry IV*, and various other plays. Quicksilver's familiarity with the London theatres is clearly part of the fashionable milieu into which he thrusts himself so eagerly.

None of this information is to suggest that William Marston was a model for Quicksilver. Nevertheless, writers draw on their experiences and their associations to furnish the fictional worlds they present, and the Marston family connection

offers a partial explanation for the richness of detail that spectators and readers may glimpse in the early scenes of *Eastward Ho!* Certainly, commentators on the play have often turned with special emphasis to Quicksilver's early statement of his standing. Theodore B. Leinwand, for example, points out that *Eastward Ho!* 'begins with two sustained autobiographical statements', those of Quicksilver and Touchstone. Quicksilver's speech, indeed, is 'the first vita', and for Leinwand, that Quicksilver 'can pass among the gallants derives, we are tacitly to understand, from the pedigree he has just declared'.³³ Mark Thornton Burnett thinks that 'Quicksilver is anxious to relieve himself of the stigma of the market, and finds comfort in the fact that the gallants who style him "cousin Frank" also recognise his gentle lineage'.³⁴ Touchstone's power over Quicksilver, says Theodora A. Jankowski, 'was given to Touchstone by Frank's justice father, the man who signed his gentle son's articles of apprentice'.³⁵ Like many of his fellow-critics, Kay also quotes Quicksilver's entire speech, and he argues that 'in asking to be treated as his father's son', Quicksilver 'is claiming that his family standing should privilege his behaviour'.³⁶ Leinwand, Burnett, and Jankowski are less concerned than is Kay with the workings of authorial agency within the comedy; instead, their principal interest lies in the way in which social practices and social changes have their depiction on the Blackfriars stage. All the critics are drawn to Quicksilver's early speech and they detect in it a force that brings a special energy to the play's opening. The placement of this speech, for Kay, is a matter of careful authorial choice in which each of the dramatists have a stake: 'Chapman, Jonson, and Marston' 'make a point of locating Quicksilver precisely on the social scale as an apprentice from a substantial gentry background'.³⁷

For some readers, on the other hand, the figure of Quicksilver exhibits a failure of collective control. Critics have often noticed that the appearances of Quicksilver in act 1 are rather different from those in later scenes. One way of assessing this charge is to ask whether it is a feature of the play in which the authors failed to achieve a harmony. The Cambridge editors raise this directly: 'Two lively critical debates about *Eastward Ho!* concern the play's attitude towards its action and the division of its authorship. These issues may be inseparable, as the treatment of key figures, particularly the mercurial Quicksilver, seems to vary in different sections'.³⁸ Gossett and Kay acknowledge the truth that a balanced critical assessment of the play and its coherence should confront the unstable presentation of Quicksilver. Of course, by drawing attention to Quicksilver's 'mercurial' nature — *quicksilver* is another name for *mercury* — they point in the direction of one possible approach to the matter. R.W. Van Fossen pursued this line of thinking with particular vigour as he challenged E.H.C. Oliphant's 'almost obstinately

wrong-headed observations'. Oliphant had claimed that Quicksilver 'is hopelessly inconsistent'. 'At first he is a swaggering wastrel; next, a cony-catching rascal; then an unscrupulous practical joker', and so on.³⁹ For Van Fossen, 'he is, in fact, mercurial. His changeableness is stressed not only in an effort to increase the comic potentialities implicit in the character, but also to emphasise even more strongly the contrast with Golding and to suggest by implication the deficiencies of the boring stability in Golding's character'.⁴⁰ Clearly, one possible view is that Quicksilver constitutes a false note in the collaborative composition of the comedy; another, that his depiction adds to its assured management.

Jonson, Chapman, and Marston

Gossett and Kay are surely right to connect the agency of the play's drafting with the kind of reactions that this drafting may invite. In Quicksilver, a flawed creation may suggest a loose collaboration; a successful depiction may indicate assured joint working. Perhaps this argument also operates the other way round: readers who detect independent writing contributions may see inconsistency while those who see signs of close collaboration are ready to see merit in the character's making. I would argue that distinctive authorial contributions may cohere with special success in a vehicle such as Quicksilver, whose relish for adopting striking and varied personae might allow a certain liberty to dramatists who otherwise need to direct their efforts to a disciplined collective whole.

To this end we could cite the exchange in which Quicksilver explains to Seagull and Sir Petronel how he proposes to treat base metal so that it may pass for silver. He 'will blanch copper so cunningly that it shall endure all proofs but the test: it shall endure malleation, it shall have the ponderosity of Luna, and the tenacity of Luna, by no means friable'; and he invites Sir Petronel to 'Take ars'nic' and to 'sublime him three or four times; then take the sublimate of this realga and put him into a glass, into chymia, and let him have a convenient decoction natural' (4.1.168–70, 174–6). Quicksilver rehearses the rhythms and the language of the verse that *The Alchemist's* Subtle and Face would utter on the same Blackfriars stage five years later. On that occasion the separatist brother Ananias was the dupe of specious language. On his first appearance Ananias hears Subtle tell Face to

Take away the recipient,
And rectify your menstrue from the phlegma.

Then pour it o' the Sol in the cucurbit,
And let 'em macerate together.⁴¹

Within a few lines the pair have tossed around such words as 'sublime and dulcify', 'Cohobation, calcination, ceration, and / Fixation' (2.5.9, 23–4). There may be a circularity in citing Quicksilver's language in 4.1 as an example of a distinctively Jonsonian passage, for it is partly such lines that have encouraged scholars to see Jonson's agency at work within this scene in the first place. But the writing is so distinctive that it feels odd even to imagine that Jonson did not shape Quicksilver's dialogue at this point in the play.

Chapman's comic impresarios often reveal a more anonymous surface to the language that they use, and this anonymity too is striking, for his tragic protagonists tend to speak verse that is highly idiosyncratic. In act 3 Quicksilver facilitates Sir Petronel's schemes: he is an inventive aide and companion, both in encouraging Sir Petronel to pursue his own ideas and wishes and in drawing Security and Seagull into backing the Virginian venture in their different ways. Quicksilver is skilful and enterprising in all his persuasion; yet we hear little of the extravagant verbal virtuosity of the lines just cited. Nor is there much sign of the vain and egoistic insistence on his status, background, social contacts, and lifestyle that suffuses Quicksilver's appearances at the start of the comedy.

Another Blackfriars play to feature Chapman's writing was also published in 1605: *All Fools*. A play of single authorship, *All Fools* had a complex company history: first drafted for the Admiral's Men at the close of the sixteenth century and subsequently staged, with at least some degree of amendment, for the children's company at Blackfriars.⁴² Rinaldo is the comic manipulator of *All Fools*, and Chapman's creation there may help us to appreciate his contribution to the shaping of Quicksilver. *All Fools* is a comedy in which the young lovers outwit their deluded parents, and Rinaldo conducts the deceptions in a decidedly self-effacing manner. He principally plays upon the gullibility of Gostanzo, who prides himself upon his own astute control over his children. Rinaldo allows Gostanzo to believe that Rinaldo's brother — Marc Antonio's son — has contracted an unwelcome marriage. Gonzago advises Marc Antonio to express his displeasure firmly whilst also making sure that his son does not run off to the wars in despair. As the spectators know, Gostanzo's son, not Marc Antonio's, has wedded without sanction. And so when Gostanzo takes in the supposed couple as a help to Marc Antonio, he unwittingly unites his own son with his son's secret wife while at the same time bringing his daughter together with the young man that she loves. Following

Gostanzo's busybody action in telling Marc Antonio about the marriage that he thinks has taken place, Gostanzo greets Rinaldo in this way:

RINALDO God save you, sir.

GOSTANZO Rinaldo, all the news
 You told me as a secret, I perceive
 Is passing common, for your father knows it.
 The first thing he related was the marriage.

RINALDO And was extremely mov'd?

GOSTANZO Beyond all measure.⁴³

Here, as elsewhere, Rinaldo's quiet and unobtrusive manner inconspicuously allows Gostanzo's self-deception to flourish.

At the same time, Rinaldo has moments of flamboyant self-presentation. Early in the final act he tells the audience that

My fortune is to win renown by gulling
 Gonstazo, Dariotto, and Cornelio,
 All which suppose, in all their different kinds,
 Their wits entire, and in themselves no piece. (5.1.11–14)

At this moment Rinaldo deploys his analysis of his victims' folly to back his boast; and this address simply matches the energy of the play's opening when Rinaldo irrepressibly mocks the aspirations of the play's male lovers.

All Fools was first a play for the public theatre, designed for acting at the Rose and by the company for whom the mesmerising stage presence of Edward Alleyn had shaped a repertoire. Chapman, indeed, had previously written the fantastic part of the title character of *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria* — variously a blind beggar or seer called Irus, the banished Duke Cleanthes, the usurer Leon, and 'the humorous duke' Hermes. We do not know which stage in the development of *All Fools* the surviving text of 1605 represents, a text we may fairly assume reflects a drama that enabled a charismatic protagonist and an undemonstrative and subtle comic manipulator to co-exist within a single role. We may guess that any performances to take place at the Rose tended to exhibit the former, and that indoor playing at the Blackfriars encouraged the latter. As for *Eastward Ho!*, we may reasonably imagine that Chapman was able to contribute an aspect of Quicksilver that allowed Quicksilver's own egoistic enterprise to subordinate itself to the disciplined exercise of cunning.

What, then, of John Marston? I suggest three ways of viewing that depiction of Quicksilver for which he held a special responsibility. First, the wilful apprentice's eagerness to find an entrée into the fashionable world of gallants is a striking part of his early appearances. Those who insistently call Quicksilver 'cousin Frank' are 'gentlemen of good phrase, perfect language, passingly behaved, gallants that wear socks and clean linen' (1.1.50–51). And so, even as the contrast between the goldsmith and his apprentice emerges in the comedy's opening dialogue, a parallel distinction is drawn, one between London's fashionable world and its life of commerce. Before a word has been spoken, the play's first spectators would have been able to notice Quicksilver's '*hat, pumps, short sword, and dagger*'. His effort to be like the young men watching the play — aping, perhaps, the individuals sitting prominently on the Blackfriars stage — would have been apparent. The youth of the actor may have given an added comic edge. *The Dutch Courtesan* also presents its own array of metropolitan gallants — Tysefew, Caquiter, Freevill — in its own first scene.⁴⁴ In that comedy, of course, the interaction is between those young gentlemen and City vintner Mulligrub. The gambit is similar: spectators are able to see a heightened reflection of their own culture and to witness its clash with urban commercial life.

Second, it is fair to suppose that a family connection with a London goldsmith's household and business can only have been a help to Marston as he took his prominent share in drafting the play's compelling expository scene. The detailed stage directions at the head of the play's second scene indicate some of the numerous vivid and material aspects of the 'Touchstones' domestic life. They mention a tailor overloaded with new finery for Gertrude, a headdress, a monkey, a maidservant, and Mildred's occupation of sewing.⁴⁵ As far as Quicksilver himself goes, his repeated insistence upon his family background and gentry status — the insistence that Leinwand, Burnett, Jankowski and others have all sought to emphasize — resounds through the play's first scenes. Until Quicksilver's dismissal early in the second act, a heightened consciousness of this gentle background permeates his part in the dialogue; and thereafter it slips from view. We do not know how William Marston carried himself whilst a member of Edward Greene's household. We may suppose, however, that the playwright's connection with this household through his cousin made possible some part of the urban comedy's imaginative conception.

This emphasis suggests a third and altogether more speculative point. How far was the play's early dialogue charged by the playwright's consciousness of his own family heritage? After all, Marston was the dramatist who brought onto the stage at Paul's two portraits, one with the inscription '*Anno domini 1599*' and the other,

of a younger man, *'Aetatis suae twenty-four'* — exactly Marston's age in 1599. Balurdo comments: 'Belike *Master Aetatis suae* was *Anno Domini*'s son.'⁴⁶ When in the same play, *Antonio and Mellida*, the title characters, share an extended duet in Italian, a page invites the forbearance of the spectators by suggesting that 'a private respect may rebate the edge' of any disapproval (4.1.224–5). The 'private respect' was presumably that Marston's mother came from an Italian family.⁴⁷ *What You Will*'s Randolpho reflects that 'the son of a divine / Seldom proves preacher, or a lawyer's son / rarely a pleader'; and critics understandably suspect that Marston is conscious of himself and his father at this moment.⁴⁸

That Marston presented on stage a goldsmith's wilful apprentice from a gentle and provincial background when he himself had a cousin in just such a situation may also have a personal valency — a valency that goes beyond an informed sense of what that situation entails. The fortunes of Marston's two cousins — one the former 'servant' of his father and the other a younger son apprenticed to a goldsmith — might conceivably have helped to furnish the concept of the reliable prentice and his wastrel fellow. But we hardly need to posit such an imaginative origin. The biblical prodigal, after all, had a censorious and conventional counterpart. We might alternatively ask whether Marston's depiction of Quicksilver was charged by some degree of authorial identification with the fictional apprentice's errant career; and whether a consciousness of his two cousins, one of which held Quicksilver's position, may have eased any such identification. This speculation, of course, is pretty much the kind of unprovable hypothesis that Fleay would once advance. And yet there is one occasion on which John Marston certainly stood in a pejorative and unflattering contrast to the elder of his two cousins: the dutiful Middle Templar. For the will in which John Marston senior named Thomas as his 'servante' as well as his 'kinsman' and entrusted to him the bequest to 'my poorest brother' also featured a deleted passage in which the father's law books were bequeathed 'to him that deserveth them not, that is my wilful disobedient son, who I think will sell them rather than use them, although I took pains and had delight therein. God bless him and give him true knowledge of himself, and to forgo his delight in plays, vain studies, and fooleries.'⁴⁹ The kind of language that John Marston, Sr, drafted, and then discarded, as he formed his testamentary purposes towards his son is not far distant from that of Touchstone towards Quicksilver in *Eastward Ho!* — a play in which fathers and proxy fathers abound.

How do we know what was in a writer's mind? In so far as we do, we see very darkly. All who try to gauge the conscious intentions of an author take a hazardous step; and those who assess the author's unconscious impulses attempt a still

more risky enterprise. When a text is of plural authorship, moreover, the endeavour accretes multiplying problems. James D. Mardock — who also gravitates to Quicksilver's long speech of self-assertion — thinks that 'Quicksilver is analogous to the playwrights of *Eastward Ho!* itself'.⁵⁰ In this analogy, Quicksilver is like Marston's Duke Hercules, Chapman's Rinaldo, or Jonson's fractious collaborators, Face and Subtle. How far we take such an approach will depend on the readiness of the individual reader to envisage a personal and authorial stake in the drama under review.

I have sought to present certain biographical information and then to use this knowledge in order to think about what kinds of individual writing enterprise might lie within a work of notable collaborative success. Quicksilver has been the focus for this exercise, and the notion that this character might in some way be 'analogous to the playwrights of *Eastward Ho!*' is the furthest reach of this line of reflection.

Coda: The Aftermath

What happened to the various individuals concerned in this essay? Critics have long noted with amusement one way in which Quicksilver undoubtedly resembles the playwrights of *Eastward Ho!* Some aspect of the comedy — probably as performed — resulted in the imprisonment of Jonson and Chapman, and possibly of Marston too. A series of letters from Jonson and Chapman marks a sustained endeavour to excuse the offence and to seek clemency. The parallel with Quicksilver is striking, if lacking in significance. On the other hand, the *Eastward Ho!* affair may impinge very directly on theatre history, for it seems to mark a break in the writing personnel of the playing company at Blackfriars. Prior to the staging of *Eastward Ho!* in 1605, we find hardly any occasions on which we can be sure that any dramatist other than Chapman, Jonson, or Marston wrote plays for the Blackfriars company, either in its manifestation as the Children of the Chapel or the Children of the Queen's Revels. By the end of 1605, or very soon after, the close involvement of these three writers in the company's repertoire sharply diminished. In the years to follow a series of new writers drafted its plays.

What of Marston's cousins? Thomas Marston is unlikely to have used the knowledge and experience he gained at the Middle Temple as a Shropshire gentleman and a lay dispenser of justice; he died in 1612 and was buried in 'Little St Hellins London'.⁵¹ William Marston, goldsmith, married 'Katherinam filiam Simonis Boreman de London mercatoris'.⁵² Simon Boreman (or Borman), haberdasher, had been involved as a principal or a promoter in privateering activities,

and he had helped to finance the fleet with which Drake attacked the Spanish shipping at Cadiz in 1587.⁵³ Katherine's mother was Isabel de Gil, a figure implicated as an agent in the harassment of London's Jewish community.⁵⁴

The marital fortunes of two of Edward Greene's daughters oddly reflect those of Gertrude and Mildred, whose husbands respectively were the adventurer Sir Petronel Flash and the punctilious Golding. Anne Greene married a John Mason in 1606, and nine years later, as Captain John Mason, Anne's husband became Newfoundland's second Governor. He published *A Briefe Discourse of the Newfoundland* in 1620. Robert Hayman the epigrammatist wrote verses to both John and Anne. Mason later moved his colonial efforts south, and as the founder of New Hampshire — for by the 1620s he was a prosperous Portsmouth householder, and hence the State's name — he is today celebrated as one of America's nation-builders.⁵⁵ Edward Greene himself died in 1619.⁵⁶

The year before *Eastward Ho!* was staged John Wollaston was transferred to Greene as his apprentice; in 1616 he married Anne's younger sister Rebecca, and he rose in time to become the prime warden of the Goldsmiths' Company and Lord Mayor of London. He later took the parliamentary side in the civil war. The key to this allegiance, writes Keith Lindley, 'is probably to be found in his long-standing attachment to godly protestantism'.⁵⁷

Notes

- 1 R.E. Brettle, 'John Marston, Dramatist: A Bibliography and Life', D.Phil. thesis (University of Oxford, 1927); Charles Trice Martin (trans. and ed.), *Minutes of Parliament of the Middle Temple*, 3 vols and index (London, 1904–5).
- 2 Suzanne Gossett and W. David Kay (eds), George Chapman, Ben Jonson, and John Marston, *Eastward Ho!*, in *The Cambridge Edition of the Complete Works of Ben Jonson*, gen. eds David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson, 7 vols (Cambridge, 2012), 7529–640. *Eastward Ho!* is cited parenthetically from the *Cambridge Edition*.
- 3 Gossett, 'Marston, Collaboration, and *Eastward Ho!*', *Renaissance Drama* 33 (2004), 181–200.
- 4 Thomas Marc Parrott (ed.), *The Plays and Poems of George Chapman: The Comedies* (London, 2014), 843–7; C.G. Petter (ed.) *Eastward Ho!* (London, 1973), xiii–xxi; and D.J. Lake, 'Eastward Ho: Linguistic Evidence for Authorship', *Notes and Queries* 226 (1981), 158–66, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/nq/28.2.158>.

- 5 See George Chapman, Ben Jonson, and John Marston, *Eastward Ho!*, ed. R.W. Van Fossen (Manchester, 1979). The play was also edited by James Knowles as part of *'The Roaring Girl' and Other City Comedies* (Oxford, 2001).
- 6 Kay, 'Parodic Wit and Social Satire in Chapman, Jonson, and Marston's *Eastward Ho!*', *English Literary Renaissance* 42 (2012), 391–424, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6757.2012.01111.x>.
- 7 See Richard Dutton, *Mastering the Revels: The Regulation and Censorship of English Renaissance Drama* (Basingstoke, 1991), and Janet Clare, *'Art Made Tongue-tied by Authority: Elizabethan and Jacobean Dramatic Censorship*, 2nd edn (Manchester, 1999); Lucy Munro, *The Children of the Queen's Revels: A Jacobean Theatre Repertory* (Cambridge, 2005); Janette Dillon, *Theatre, Court and City, 1595–1610: Drama and Social Space in London* (Cambridge, 2000); Ceri Sullivan, *The Rhetoric of Credit in Early Modern Writing* (Madison, NJ, and London, 2002); Jyotsa G. Singh (ed.), *A Companion to the Global Renaissance: English Literature and Culture in the Era of Expansion* (Oxford, 2009).
- 8 Fleay, *A Biographical Chronicle of the English Drama, 1559–1642*, 2 vols (London, 1891), 1.61.
- 9 The details of the Marston family are most fully set out in the *Transactions of the Shropshire Archaeological and Natural History Society*, 4th series, 8 (1920–1), 1–48, 9 (1923–4), 181–220, and 10 (1925–6), 45–70. Much of the material in the *Transactions* draws from Robert Tresswell and Augustine Vincent, *The Visitation of Shropshire, taken in the year 1623*, ed. George Grazebrook and John Paul Rylands, 2 vols (London, 1889) 2.350–1. See also Joseph Hunter, *Chorus Vatum Anglicanorum*, British Library, ADD MS 24487, fols 190v–192r.
- 10 According to *Transactions* 8.12, Thomas was the elder son; the family tree presented by Tresswell and Vincent, *The Visitation of Shropshire*, suggests that Ralph was the firstborn.
- 11 *Transactions*, 8.12.
- 12 Ibid, 8.13; Tresswell and Vincent, *The Visitation of Shropshire*, 2:351.
- 13 E.A.J. Honigmann and Susan Brock, *Playhouse Wills, 1558–1642* (Manchester, 1993), 177.
- 14 *Minutes of Parliament of the Middle Temple*, 2:454.
- 15 *Transactions*, 8.13.
- 16 Robert Bearman, 'Thomas Greene: Stratford-upon-Avon's Town Clerk and Shakespeare's Lodger', *Shakespeare Survey* 65 (2012), 291, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/SO9781139170000.022>.
- 17 Ibid, 291–2.

- 18 Katherine Duncan-Jones, *Ungentle Shakespeare: Scenes from his Life* (London, 2001), 159.
- 19 *Transactions*, 10.64; see Brettle, 'John Marston, Dramatist', 291; The National Archives PROB 11/122/280.
- 20 See James Knowles, 'Marston, John (*hap.* 1576, *d.* 1634)', *The Dictionary of National Biography (DNB)* (Oxford and New York, 2004–), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/18164>.
- 21 Brettle, 'John Marston, Dramatist', 414.
- 22 *Ibid.*, 291.
- 23 Goldsmiths' Company Library, Goldsmiths' Company Apprentice Book I, fol. 120r.
- 24 Tresswell and Vincent, *The Visitation of Shropshire*, 2:351.
- 25 *Ibid.*
- 26 *Transactions*, 8.13.
- 27 *Ibid.*; Tresswell and Vincent, *The Visitation of Shropshire*, 2:351.
- 28 Goldsmiths' Company Court Minute Book O part 3, 414.
- 29 Jonson, 'Informations to William Drummond of Hawthornden', Ian Donaldson (ed.), ll 208, 210, in *The Cambridge Edition of the Complete Works of Ben Jonson*, 5.351–91.
- 30 Lake, 'Eastward Ho: Linguistic Evidence for Authorship', cited above.
- 31 See Van Fossen (ed.), *Eastward Ho*, 226 (Appendix 3: 'Division of Authorship').
- 32 Marston, *The Dutch Courtesan*, ed. David Crane (London and New York, 1997), 1.1.101–6.
- 33 Leinwand, *Theatre, Finance and Society in Early Modern England* (Cambridge, 1999), 44, 45.
- 34 Burnett, *Masters and Servants in English Renaissance Drama and Culture: Authority and Obedience* (Basingstoke and New York, 1997), 41.
- 35 Jankowski, 'Class Categorization, Capitalism, and the Problem of "Gentle" Identity in *The Royall King and the Loyall Subject* and *Eastward Ho!*', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England* 19 (2006), 166.
- 36 Kay, 'Parodic Wit', 406.
- 37 *Ibid.*
- 38 Gossett and Kay (eds), *Eastward Ho!*, 537.
- 39 E.H.C. Oliphant (ed.), *Shakespeare and his Fellow Dramatists: A Selection of Plays Illustrating the Glories of the Golden Age of English Drama*, 2 vols (New York, 1929), 1.1009.
- 40 Van Fossen (ed.), *Eastward Ho*, 30–1.
- 41 *The Alchemist*, ed. Peter Holland and William Sherman, 2.5.1–4, in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, 3.541–710.

- 42 See Albert H. Tricomi, 'The Dates of the Plays of George Chapman', *English Literary Renaissance* 12 (1982), 242–66 (243–45), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1475-6757.1982.tb00835.x>.
- 43 George Chapman, *All Fools*, ed. Frank Manley (London, 1968), 1.1.346–50.
- 44 See David Crane, 'Patterns of Audience Involvement at the Blackfriars Theatre in the Early Seventeenth Century: Some Moments in Marston's *The Dutch Courtesan*', in Dieter Mehl, Angela Stock and Anne-Julia Zwierlein (eds), *Plotting Early Modern London: New Essays on Jacobean City Comedy* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), 97–107.
- 45 See Jean E. Howard, 'Bettrice's Monkey: Staging Exotica in Early Modern London Comedy', in Singh (ed.), *A Companion to the Global Renaissance*, 325–39, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/9781444310986.ch19>.
- 46 Marston, *Antonio and Mellida*, ed. W. Reavley Gair (Manchester, 1991), 5.1.8, 11, 12–13.
- 47 Gair (ed.), *Antonio and Mellida*, 137.
- 48 Marston, *What You Will*, ed. M.R. Woodhead (Nottingham, 1980), ll 313–15; Macdonald P. Jackson and Michael Neill (eds), *The Selected Plays of John Marston* (Cambridge, 1986), x.
- 49 Cited in Gair (ed.), *Antonio and Mellida*, 11.
- 50 Mardock, 'Our Scene is London': *Ben Jonson's City and the Space of the Author* (London, 2008), 64.
- 51 Tresswell and Vincent, *The Visitation of Shropshire*, 2:351.
- 52 Ibid; *Transactions*, 8:13.
- 53 K.R. Andrews, *Elizabethan Privateering, 1583–1603* (Cambridge, 1964; repr. 1966), 177, 206; Peter T. Bradley, *British Maritime Enterprise in the New World: From the Late Fifteenth to the Mid-Eighteenth Century* (Lampeter, 1999), 131; and Robert Leng, 'Sir Francis Drake's memorable service done against the Spaniard', *Camden Old Series* 87 (1864), 3–54 (26–7), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1027/S2042169900006738>.
- 54 See Lucien Wolf, 'Jews in Elizabethan England', *Transactions of the Jewish Historical Society of England* 11 (1924–7), 1–91 (5–6).
- 55 See D. Dymond, *Captain John Mason and the Duke of Buckingham*, The Portsmouth Papers 17 (Portsmouth, 1972), Charles Wesley Tuttle, 'Memoir of Captain John Mason', in John Ward Dean (ed.), *Captain John Mason, Founder of New Hampshire* (Boston, 1887), 1–32; and Hayman, *Quodlibets, lately come over from New Britaniola, Old New-foundland* (London, 1628), E4r.
- 56 TNA PROB 11/135/28.
- 57 Lindley, 'Wollaston, Sir John (1585/6–1658)', *DNB* (Oxford and New York, 2004-), <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/66737>.

